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IN MARCH 1941, a chemist working in a Lancashire laboratory touched a mass of molten plastic with a glass rod. As he drew the rod away, the effect he had hoped for occurred. A shining, gossamer filament was formed, which hardened in the cool air. This filament—now known as 'Terylene'—will soon be of the utmost value to Britain, for with it can be made new and wonderful fabrics of every kind; suitings, dress materials, and underwear that are at once strong, light and easy to wash, yet warm and soft. 'Terylene' is also being developed for heavy industrial fabrics and ropes, offering outstanding advantages in efficiency and economy. The immense task of developing 'Terylene' from a chemist's experiment to a fully-fledged fibre in full-scale production has been undertaken by I.C.I. Already the work of evaluation and development has cost £3,000,000 while more than £10,000,000 is being

spent on the first full-scale manufacturing plant now being built at I.C.I.'s Wilton works in North Yorkshire. This plant is planned to be completed before the end of 1954 and to come into production at the beginning of 1955, but during 1953, I.C.I. decided—such was its faith in the future of 'Terylene'—to double the size of this plant and to establish a new Fibres Headquarters making the total investment in 'Terylene' nearly £20,000,000.

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Imperial Chemical Industries Limited



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NUMBER

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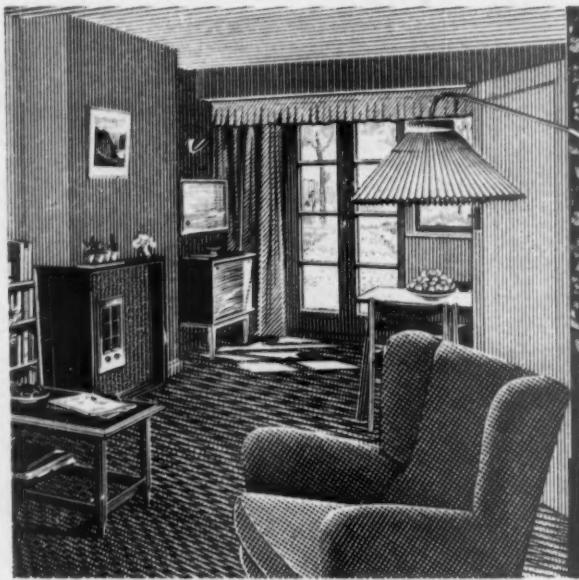
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TODAY is the day of the Small Home, and this issue, imaginatively edited to be of utmost benefit to all who live in small homes, and to those who plan to build them, is one of the most skilful contributions to gracious living ever made by *IDEAL HOME* Magazine. In this inspiring number experts bring their professional skills and talents to bear upon every aspect of planning the Small Home and its garden. This is certain to be another of *IDEAL HOME*'s much-sought-after issues: do reserve your copy today.



IDEAL HOME

Magazine

FEBRUARY ISSUE · ON SALE JAN. 22 · TWO SHILLINGS

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*..let's hurry home to our
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When you reach home cold and tired on a rough winter day, and close the door behind you against the wind and rain, what a comfort it is to drink a hot cup of 'Ovaltine.' It helps to restore your spirits and renew your energy.

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P.928A



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You remember I went to South Africa last year. I happened to meet a man who took me round the wonderful Wineries there where millions of gallons were being matured for the British market.

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The best wines are kept seven years at least before they are shipped. The South African Wine Farmers are determined—in spite of the demands from all over the world—to hold back and let the good stuff mature properly. You see their climate and soil are simply ideal for wine-growing, but it is necessary not only to produce lovely wine but, if you establish a name and reputation, to provide for keeping up the quality over the years.

These South African people certainly keep on improving their wines—especially their sherry. It's a credit to them.

That's what comes of selecting and maturing and waiting and keeping on doing that, and the longer it goes on the better the quality becomes.

I must say this is one of the finest Sherries I've ever tasted.

Well, keep on drinking the best South African Sherries and you will find the quality will astonish you."

**SOUTH AFRICAN WINE FARMERS
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These, the most important of all things carried by transport, are being carried more and more by Fodens. They have proved themselves so well worthy of the task, with their utter reliability, their power and performance, low fuel consumption and simplicity of maintenance. All these qualities stem from the years of experience and research which have created Foden's proud tradition.



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ROYAL AIR FORCE 'CANBERRA'

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In winning the England — New Zealand Air Race, and in gaining the World's Altitude Record, the Canberra has proved itself to be one of the world's most notable aircraft. And as a light bomber in service with the R.A.F. its brilliant performance is the delight of pilots and navigators.

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the educational standards required. You believe you can make a real contribution to the spirit and efficiency of the Royal Air Force and that a career in the R.A.F. offers specially satisfying rewards to be found in few other callings. Do you think you fit this description? If so, the best thing to do is to write a letter to the Air Ministry giving your age and full particulars of your education, examinations passed and your career to date, and asking for more information about the type of commission which interests you (see table). Address your letter to Under Secretary of State, Air Ministry (P.U. 121), Adastral House M.R.2, London, W.C.2.

4 WAYS TO A FLYING COMMISSION IN THE R.A.F.

TYPE OF COMMISSION	AGE LIMITS	EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS
PERMANENT (R.A.F. Cadetship at Cranwell)	17—19	Civil Service Commission Examination
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SHORT SERVICE	17½—26	General Certificate of Education, Scottish Leaving Certificate or equivalent
NATIONAL SERVICE*	During Service	General Certificate of Education, Scottish Leaving Certificate or equivalent

* For subsequent
service with the
R. Aux. A.F. or
R.A.F.V.R.



THERE'S A PLACE FOR THE BEST IN THE R.A.F.

The better life of Mrs. Jones

Mrs. Jones looks down the rows of bright, hygienically sealed tins and packets on the grocer's shelves. In a glance she sees what she wants, the names to ask for, and exactly what to expect from what she buys. Follow Mrs. Jones home. She has a vacuum cleaner, a washing machine, a modern cooker, perhaps a refrigerator. Her home is full of inventions to save her work.



Grandma Jones was confronted by stacks, tins, boxes of loose anonymous products exposed and manhandled at every stage from raw materials to final consumption.

Yes. House-keeping is far easier for Mrs. Jones than it was a generation or two ago.

This is not merely a matter of higher incomes. All these good things of life have been made known to Mrs. Jones by advertising. It is advertising that creates mass demand and makes mass production with lower costs possible. Goods which without advertising could only be custom built for a wealthy few are now within the reach of millions.

The superficial statement that advertising is an uncompensated cost which can only increase prices is far from true. Advertising means better goods for more people. And to touch on a deeper question, the stabilising effect of advertising on demand is a powerful influence against the sales depressions and consequent unemployment which are a constant danger in the trade cycle.

Advertising means

better goods for more people



Issued by the
Express Group of Newspapers
in the interests
of British Industry



CHARIVARIA

THE four representatives of the four High Commissioners of the four Powers in Berlin have exercised great patience during their meetings to arrange next week's meeting of the four Foreign Ministers. But why could not the Ministers have held their own meeting to arrange the meeting? While they were at it they could have had it.



Protective clothing designed to safeguard civilians against every form of warfare is the subject of joint research by U.S. Service departments. The investigating committee, it is understood, began with a standard American football costume and is systematically whittling it down to essentials.

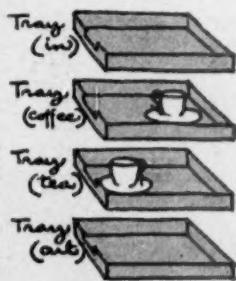
Miss Jane Russell's film *The French Line*, says a commentator, would bring the police to any West End cinema where it was being exhibited. Moreover, after the pay rise, they could afford to go.

Coincident with the proposal to increase rail freight charges comes the report that hundreds of road bridges are on the verge of collapse. This will sharpen competition still further between the railways and the Road Haulage Executive, especially by rival breakdown gangs working to remove the debris of a road bridge collapsed across the railway line.

Bad smells in the House of Commons have been the subject of recent disclosures by a sensitive Member. It is thought that, as an expression of international goodwill, a gesture may soon be forthcoming from M. Coty.

Last month's gift tokens for books, theatre tickets, beer, wine and toilet requisites are still flooding into the shops for realization. Assistants are muttering about a token strike.

Under a recent ruling higher grade Civil Servants are to have in their offices a table (pedestal), table (drop leaf), table (side), chair (writing), chair (interviewing) and bookcase (enclosed). Regardless of expense (public).



Mr. Clifton and Mr. Cowling, the television weather experts who made their debut last week, propose to make a suitable apology if things fail to turn out as they predict. It is hoped that gradually, however, with the influence of the B.B.C. behind them, the weather will come to rely on them.

Passers-by failed to intervene recently when thirteen boys and girls, later brought before a juvenile court, swarmed into partly-built houses, broke doors and windows, tore up floorboards, wrenched out piping, daubed outhouses with tar, set fire to timber and smeared the whole with lime and cement. It was assumed, of course, that they were engaged in a psychiatric period of free expression.



With the return of night-life on its pre-war scale many London restaurateurs are reported to be providing guests with late suppers once more. In establishments not yet offering this amenity patrons can obtain much the same effect by ordering dinner in the usual way.



NOBODY ever had worse luck than the Seventh Day Adventist missionaries who went to try to convert the people of the Friendly Isles. It was all some seventy years ago—"a few years," as they say there, "after the Measles." For there was a great epidemic of measles in the islands in 1876, and it is from that catastrophe that all history is dated.

Half the way round the world from Greenwich, where you can take your choice whether you are 180 degrees East or 180 degrees West, runs the International Date Line, and when you cross that line you either have one day twice over or you skip a day, as the case may be. Now, if you look at your atlas you will see that Fiji comes just to the Australian side of the International Date Line. The Line almost scrapes its shores. You will also see that the Friendly Isles come a little way to the American side. But since all their business is with Fiji, the Friendly Islanders, ever since George and Pudding Time and Date Lines and all the other contraptions of European civilization came in, have very sensibly decided to behave—to keep their days—as if they were on the Fijian side.

So it came about that when in 1880 the Seventh Day Adventist missionaries arrived in the Friendly Isles the natives, true to their name, said to them with all courtesy: "But what do we have to do if we join your religion?"

"Oh," said the missionaries, "you have to keep your Sundays on a Saturday."

"Why," said the natives, "we do that anyway," and with peals of happy laughter they explained to one another how these distant white men had also had the sense to adopt the progressive custom which had made the Friendly Islanders so free and prosperous.

WHAT'S THE TIME IN THE FRIENDLY ISLES?

So things went on for nearly forty years until at the time of the first World War some more white men came to them and tried to persuade them to adopt a new and, as they alleged, a yet more progressive custom called Daylight Saving. "There is a war on," said the white men. "You must save daylight. You must dig for victory."

Nobody in fact had ever dug—worth talking about—in the Friendly Isles. It was not necessary. Nature provided her bounty untried. It is the whole point of the isles that she does so. The Islanders just sit around eating roast pigs with their fingers, and they were very well aware that, if they got up an hour earlier, all that would happen would be that they sat around for an hour longer. But again in their courtesy they had no wish to argue. "Yes," they said.

But then the white men continued. "And in order to induce you to get up earlier, we are going to introduce a thing called Daylight Saving. We are going to take all your clocks and move them forward an hour, so that, when you think that it is seven o'clock, it will really only be six o'clock, and you will get out

of bed an hour earlier than you think."

It was at this that the Islanders turned. The wise chief stood forward and said to the white men: "But then, when it is really twelve o'clock, our clocks will say that it is one o'clock."

"Why, yes, of course," said the white men.

"But then," said the Wise Chief, "you are asking us to make our clocks tell a lie. When the sun stands directly overhead, then it is midday. That is what midday means. It cannot be one o'clock just because you make our clocks say so."

And they went off to consider these things by themselves. When they came back the Wise Chief said "We are the servants of the King of England. We live to do his will. If he bids us get up at six o'clock in the morning, then we will get up at six o'clock in the morning. If he tells us that only thus will it be possible for the King of England to beat the King of Germany in his war, then we will most gladly do his will. If the worst comes to the worst we will even get up at five o'clock in the morning if he wishes. But what we will not do—not even for the King of England—is to call six o'clock seven o'clock, for that is to tell a lie, and never since the third year after the Measles—never since the days of the Accursed Thing—has it been known that a chief of the Friendly Isles should tell a lie. To call Saturday Sunday is a venial, trivial thing, for the week is a man-made conventional unit, but to call six o'clock seven o'clock is a wicked, blasphemous thing, for the day is a natural, God-made unit."

CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS

 & &

Whispers of Cordiality

MOLOTOV is nice, his Russian eye
Is underlined for emphasis.
Unpatented, his friendly burst
Gives promise of Atomic bliss

E. H. S.





Soothsayer: "Beware the shades of Munich."



HE travel agent I work for was in a bit of a jam. He'd apparently got too much on his plate. Apart from his usual commitments he was opening up a kind of holiday camp near Rome, and moving all the inhabitants of a convent from Cheam to the Holy City. An English lady called Miss Trill was working as my agent's representative in Italy. A woman of stainless reputation, it seemed. She was arranging both temporary accommodation for the nuns in Rome and helping with the organization of the holiday camp. For these activities she had been forwarded some three thousand pounds.

"I'd be glad if you'd help me shift the nuns," said my agent, "and when we reach Rome you can go on with the holiday-makers to Rocca-di-Monte. They stay there fifteen days, and when I've got my lot fixed in their new billets I'll drop over and see you. I'll need a rest."

Roman Holiday

BY
ANTHONY CARSON

We met at Victoria. My agent was talking to the Mother Superior, and the station platform was black with nuns' habits. I had never seen anything like it. Various elder sisters were acting as prefects, dashing up and down with lists and ticking off names. Eventually all of them were bundled into the train, the whistle blew and we were off. But that was only the beginning. My agent is a very conscientious man, and we went up and down the train checking names, and arranging about soda-water, and then going back to locate missing individuals. I must say they were very cheerful, performing their offices with muttering lips, and then chattering about the scenery with much more animation than the average apathetic sinner.

When we reached Newhaven the prefects got to work with trim efficiency and we jammed ourselves on to the boat. I don't think the sailors had ever seen so many nuns in their lives. They looked rather frightened. The agent and I went down to the bar and clinked glasses with relief. "This'll help to wash away that stained-glass feeling," he said, and began to swear. The strain went out of his face.

We reached Dieppe, and had a lot of trouble allocating seats for our clients. The sight of so many nuns got on people's nerves, particularly those who were going to Paris for a spree. "It's unfair to let so many out at the same time," said one man angrily to my agent in the *wagon-restaurant*. At the Gare St.-Lazare we were met by coaches and driven to the Gare de Lyon, where packed dinners were distributed up and down the train. Unfortunately many of them got lost, and there was a certain amount of good-natured

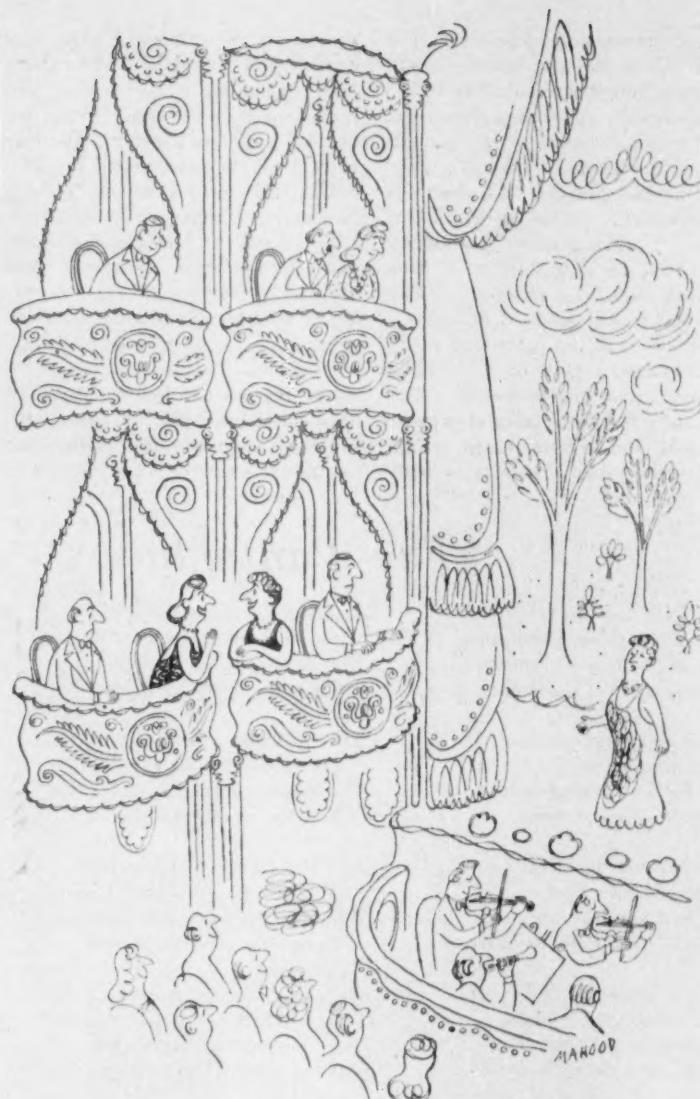


fainting before we reached Milan the next afternoon and changed trains for Rome.

The rest of the trip I devoted to my holiday-makers, composed of five men and fifteen women. Most of the women were superior types of clerks who spoke in intensely lady-like accents. There was one vaguely attractive girl who giggled and the men glued their eyes on her self-consciously all the time. When we reached Rome I was introduced to Miss Trill. She was a large sexless-looking woman with brown hair and glazed eyes. She looked as if she had just been beaten. "Poor Miss Trill has been overworking," murmured my agent with some concern. Miss Trill pointed out a coach to me, and got ready to receive the transplanted convent.

The coach started off, accompanied by a kind of seedy-looking guide called Emilio, and then stopped in the middle of the city for three hours. The guide and the driver left the coach. We could hear them shouting at one another. "What is happening?" asked a disapproving, elocuted voice from the back, as isolated from life as an English Sunday. I hadn't the slightest idea. I felt the wings of panic but an acceptance of adventure. Writers need them. "Petrol," I said. "There's a strike on." Finally Emilio and the driver returned. "What's wrong?" I asked Emilio in Italian. "It's the Captain," said Emilio. "We can't find him, and we can't move without his orders." "What Captain?" I asked, astonished. "The boss," he said, "the boss of the holiday camp and the nuns and the whole business." "You've got to go to the Rocca-di-Monte this instant," I said. "My clients are starving and exhausted."

We started off and drove for about four hours into the black night. Then the coach stopped on top of a hill. I could hear nightingales pouring their hearts into the starless solitude. "I don't know where we are," said Emilio. "The camp should be somewhere near here." The driver, Emilio and I set off into the night and eventually found the camp. It was only half built, and we



nearly fell into the excavations for a swimming pool. In a house near by we found an elderly caretaker and his wife. "Dio mio, the Captain never told us you were arriving to-night." Somehow or other, we crammed the holiday-makers into undecorated rooms with no furniture. An enormous blood-thirsty brass-band of mosquitoes marched into the camp and began to eat us. "We'll get the Captain to send up the furniture to-morrow. It will be quite cosy," said the caretaker idiotically. I didn't dare face my clients, but went off to bed in one of the bare rooms.

The next day my agent rang me up and asked me to come to Rome at once. "But I can't leave the people here," I shouted. "It's chaos." He was adamant. Something ghastly had happened. The coach drove me into Rome and I found my agent in a café. He was crying. When he saw me, he stopped, and gave a ghastly grin. "Thank God you've come," he said. "It makes it seem more of a joke. Hideous, but a joke. Something for you to write about. Listen. Miss Trill has confessed the truth. When I sent her all that money, she met someone called the Captain. He said he'd

arrange everything for her. The nuns' billets and the holiday camp. She gave him every cent. Well, he's disappeared. In an enormous car with two mistresses." He put his head in his hands. "He has a wife, too," he said limply. "All the nuns are stranded. All of them. All of them." I told him about the holiday camp, but he didn't listen. "Five hundred nuns," he moaned. "The Pope will hear about it. I'm ruined."

We went to the police and made a statement. One of the police officials roared with laughter. "The Captain! He's our prize specimen. He sold an American a public fountain last year. His success with

women is phenomenal. He once combed a complete hotel, every floor, including the maids. You found a rich one there. We'll get him for you, don't worry. We love each other, the Captain and I." This didn't cheer up my agent. I think he was most shaken about Miss Trill. "We've got to pay the landladies and save the nuns," he said. "And my holiday-makers," I said, shivering at the thought of what must be going on.

Luckily, arrangements were made through the British consul to have all debts paid, by assurances from the London bank. Then the Captain was caught. The agent and

I went to see him. The laughing official brought him in like a pet animal, stroking his head. He was a small man, almost like a dwarf, with a rat-like face. "Our dear little Captain," said the official. "He and I will have a long chat about money, won't we, little Captain?" He patted his face, and together they walked down a long corridor.

There's one thing I won't forgive my agent for. He sent me back to the holiday camp alone. He said he was too tired, and that I was the sort of chap to deal with anything, "... and it will be a first-rate experience for your writing."

The Pantoglaze

BY EVOE

ROUND and forever round,
A glittering panorama,
Glide on the frosted ground
The persons of the drama.

Round and forever round,
Safe as a circus pony
Glide with a rasping sound
The *dramatis personæ*.

Incomparably beautiful
That circumvolitation,
Swift as a wind-blown gull
Above Saint Pancras Station.

Fair as a white-plumed swan,
And every soul rejoices
At all this art laid on
With other people's voices.

Yours is the matchless spell
That sets man's heart a-flutter,
No one could glide so well
On orange peel, or butter.

Though I miss the kitchen scenes,
The whitewash and the plaster,
The ashbins and hasbeens
And the crockery disaster,

And the Dames of yesteryear
(Where still my heart's a rover)
Who used no ice-bound mere
To get the good jokes over.

Then was the wingless foot:
Dick Whittington and Crusoe
Quite frequently stayed put
Because they had to do so.

Then was the warmer time,
Gayer, and somewhat dafter,
When masque was blent with rhyme
And apoplectic laughter.

Yet still glide on, glide on
And heed not my vagaries,
Swan by revolving swan,
Refrigerated fairies!

Glide on your glassy rink
In hyperborean splendour,
Azure and green and pink,
Aces of either gender.

Mine is no magic wand,
Howe'er so neat the notion,
To turn your dizzying pond
Into a treacle ocean.

Life with Claudia

COUNTRY WEEK-END



What a lot healthy exercise,

good, plain food

and a long night's rest

can do for a girl!



"Mind that rut . . . look out for this blind corner . . . you're too high—we'll never make it . . ."

Stroheim Redivivus

BY ANTHONY POWELL

MR. ERICH VON STROHEIM, on a visit to London to launch a season of his films at the National Film Theatre, hardly looks in the late sixties of his age. Trim, deep-voiced, formal, a touch of melancholy becomes him. I expressed my admiration especially for that opening sequence of *The Merry Widow*, which shows the final stages of army manoeuvres in a Balkan State, clearly intended to be Montenegro, though disguised under the name of Monteblanco.

"I arranged for two military chaplains to appear in the background," he said, immediately grasping the significance of my remark—"Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox, since both religions were represented on the establishment of the Montenegrin army. I was considered mad for insisting on the introduction of these chaplains."

The Stroheim legend, like that of all great men, is inclined to become wedged in a groove that conveys only part of the story. In person, we think of him clad essentially in uniform. That image is the result of our own visual experience. But we are also familiar with second-hand reports regarding his liking for his own way, and disregard for the company's money in a determination that any picture in which he has a hand should turn out a work of art. This is certainly an alarming reputation to have established in a place like Hollywood, where the big executives of the film industry are so justly



famous for their humility, economy, and quiet good taste.

In that unhappy city the film industry was born, lived feverishly for a time, and now seems to have fallen into a kind of premature senility. No doubt all sorts of cogent reasons could be put forward to explain this decline. One cause is possibly the too frequent assumption on the part of these executives that a public exists mentally more arrested, ignorant and insensitive than themselves. On the whole they are a race of men of whom the best to be said is that they have pursued their passion for the obvious with a love greater even than the love of money.

However, this is no time for

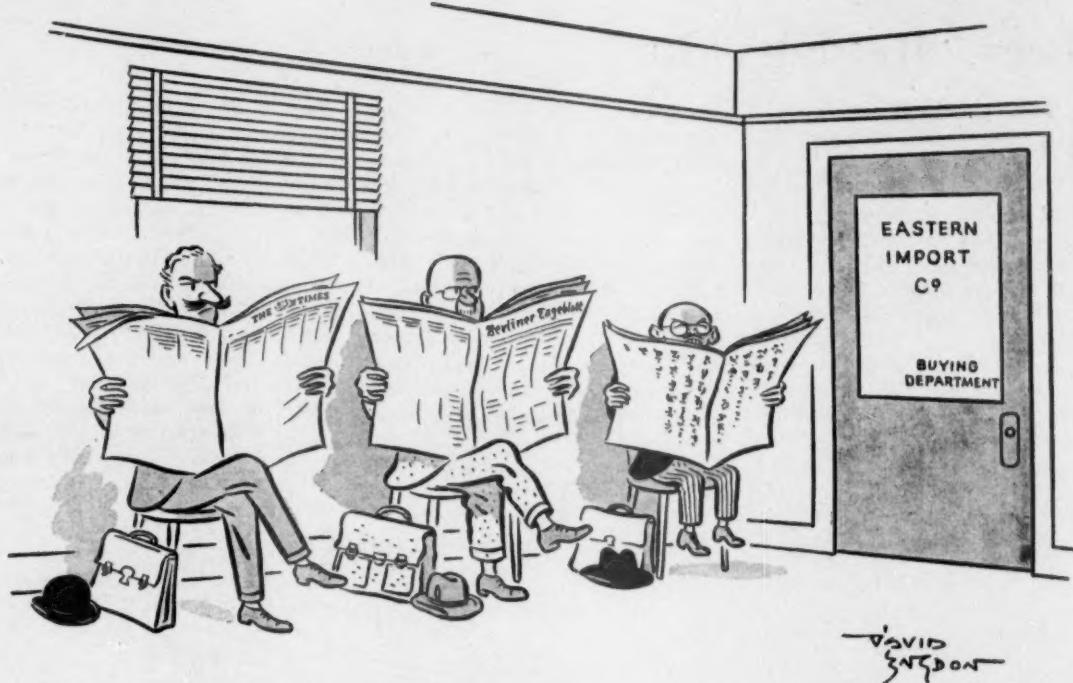
regrets; and it would be unjust to pretend that there have been no bright spots among much inspissated gloom. But when we consider Stroheim's past he appears not as a director different from most other directors, but a director different from *all* other directors. Among those few whose labours may be measured in terms of art, he holds a place that might be compared with that of Toulouse-Lautrec in the sphere of painting. Like Lautrec, Stroheim brings flourish, wit, and a sense of design to actions and surroundings in themselves tawdry and sinister. He imparts a universality to what would be otherwise merely sordid, violent, or prodigal.

That his greatest triumphs belong to the period of the silent film, rather than to that of talking-pictures, has, in my opinion, little or nothing to do with the alleged extravagance of his tastes or technical developments in the cinema. Stroheim was a victim of the *Zeitgeist*: a casualty, ultimately, of the new political puritanism of the thirties which could not stomach the rich dishes he so liberally proffered.

Space does not allow a catalogue of his successes—from the directing of *Greed* to the acting of von Rauffenstein in *La Grande Illusion*—but it is perhaps permissible to recall *Foolish Wives*, which first appeared in 1921 and has been more than once revived in this country. Stroheim himself played the hero, Count Karamzin, a White Russian adventurer living on his wits in Monte Carlo at the end of the war: accepting the meagre savings of a housemaid, plain and no longer young ("It is not much for a man who has given all for his country"); blackmailing an American lady (cast as an American ambassadress, but altered to the wife of a business-man); pursuing a beautiful mental deficient; finally murdered by the imbecile girl's father who disposes of the corpse down the town drain, whence the count floats out at last towards the "tideless dolorous inland sea."

Foolish Wives was Stroheim at his most characteristic, his most





macabre; but a word should also be said of his extraordinary achievement in making actors convincingly resemble professional soldiers. For some reason this is perhaps the most difficult of all histrionic effects. It would not be going too far to say that nothing approaching a convincing soldier was known on the screen before Stroheim took the matter in hand. His method was a rigid insistence on accuracy of uniform and equipment—accuracy is a quality peculiarly alien to the American temperament—but this adherence to fact was counterpointed with imagination and immense grasp of dramatic style. Thus the naturalism of the manœuvres in *The Merry Widow*, mentioned above, might be contrasted, in the same film, with the massed drums advancing slowly and diagonally, like a ballet, down the steps of the cathedral.

What dreams are conjured up by a man with such gifts. One wishes that he could produce as films, regardless of expense, some of the books that cover ground sympathetic to him. The Viennese setting of Musil's *The Man Without Qualities* immediately comes to mind. Or, to turn to another Austrian novelist of

an entirely different sort, Alexander Lernet-Holenia's *The Standard*, in which a cavalry officer brings back the regimental standard after the collapse of the Imperial and Royal Army, enduring many adventures (including a battle with rats under the old Turkish citadel at Belgrade), to burn the standard at Schönbrunn. Kipling, too, surely has much to offer: military life in India in the 'eighties, or the blind artist of *The Light that Failed* stumbling forward to die in battle inland from Suakin.

The mention of Musil suggests the more static masterpieces of literature—and why should a Stroheim production stop short of Proust? Stroheim's peculiar power of effectively piling up detail could be employed to perfection in a film version of *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu*, which, in the truest sense, has as much "action" as any book ever written; though, it is true, not action of the obvious kind. Think of the scene when Marcel destroys M. de Charlus's top-hat, the rows of St. Loup with his mistress, the manager of the hotel at Balbec, the social advancement of Mme. Verdurin . . . the possibilities are endless.

We talked together of the disregard of most directors for correctness, especially where military turnout is concerned.

"For them it is just Horse Opera," said Stroheim.

It seemed all wrong that he himself should not be in uniform at that moment.

"I no longer look like the Oberleutnant I once was," he insisted.

But it is not his figure so much as his personality that now demands the trappings of seniority. The so-called "German" uniform of the former Austro-Hungarian army might be appropriate—the white tunie, crimson overall-trousers, the cocked hat with green plumes—as opposed to the "Hungarian" uniform of the same rank—hussar dress entirely in crimson. Any way, whichever he chose, Stroheim has won for himself general's rank.

"Snell, out on the wing, held up United as they tried to push through on the right. Berry looked dangerous until Snell came on the scene, but he was eventually bundled over the liaison bridge at the wodarow line, ball as well."

Sunderland Echo

Frontier guards civil?

Sorry, Mr. Sorokin

BY H. F. ELLIS

THE chair-lift up Mt. Ajax, in Colorado, is the longest chair-lift in the world.

So I was told. If it is *not* the longest chair-lift in the world, then I was told wrong. A note in my diary, made on the spot, gives its total length as fourteen thousand feet, which seems pretty long to me. Indeed, it seems so long—taken in conjunction with the further facts that Aspen, from which the lift starts, is nearly eight thousand feet above sea-level, and Mt. Ajax itself a mere eleven thousand—that I begin to have cold feet about the

number of noughts. But, of course, it has to be remembered that in the Rocky Mountains, as elsewhere, the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle tends to be a good deal longer than the perpendicular. And this particular hypotenuse sags in the middle.

Aspen is rather an oddity. Once, back in the 1880s, it was a booming silver-mining town, with a population of fifteen thousand, regular trains, plenty of saloons and—surprisingly to one who knows his old mining towns mainly by courtesy of Hollywood—"twenty-six churches." Now, it is (or anyway it was in 1950) a

small huddle of houses and wooden shanties, and just beginning to fight its way back to prosperity as a winter-sports centre. Another odd thing about the place, as seen on an April day by a traveller from an antique land, is the abrupt transition from dust to snow. From the bus stop by the Jerome Hotel you walk along dirt roads, dry and dusty in the spring sunshine, to the very foot of the chair-lift—and there is the snow. Thin stuff, certainly, and mangy, with tufts of grass showing through, but just enough of it at the bottom of the slope to enable skiers



"Table 27, and for heaven's sake don't hurry."

to swish round in a slithery Christie and, in their impetuous American way, allow their posteriors to be scooped up by the lift and hoisted once more to the heights.

I also was scooped. The desire to ski, when you have not done so for fifteen years, is strong; and the desire to ski in the Rockies, when you have hitherto ski-ed only at Wengen (and been patronized accordingly by the "Oh, no—we always go to Italy" boys), is very strong indeed. So I pulled my snap-brim firmly over my eyes, and was whirled away like so much spindrift, high above the pine trees and the snow-slopes and the dark speeding figures down below.

Mr. Constantin Sorokin, leader of the Russian ski-ing team at present in Switzerland, has recently expressed disdain for chair-lifts. "Up by chair-lift, down by force of gravity—what has that got to do with honest physical culture?" he is reported to have said, adding in the ineffable Soviet way that "Ski-lifts and the like would not be approved in Russia." But if, inconceivably, he found himself at the foot of Mt. Ajax, with only four hours in hand before the last bus back, would he seriously start herring-boning away up the mountainside in a double-breasted grey suit and tan Oxfords unprovided with skins? It is all very well to say that "Sport without toil and sweat, without the satisfaction of self-denial and self-conquest, is nothing more than an amusement." Ever ski-ed in the high Rockies, Sorokin?

Anyway, up I went. At the Sundeck, on top, it seemed best to have lunch before going into the question of hiring boots and skis, and I fell into conversation at table with four young men from Michigan. It was only their second day at Aspen, and if this were fiction I should content myself with saying that only one or at most two of them were already crippled. But the sober fact is that one had his foot in plaster and two of the others had sprains so severe that they would not be able to ski for several days. They had driven the best part of two thousand miles, only stopping to change drivers, and reckoned they had been unwise to start ski-ing the moment



"Then where did you want it?"

they arrived. "Ought to have had a sleep and got toned up," the man in plaster said.

"No time for that," the shoulder-sprain objected. "We only got a week here, start to finish."

"I've only got two hours," I told them, and ran a hand thoughtfully down my leg. It seemed pretty toneless to me.

"Tough," the third cripple said. "Don't waste it"; and he began to ask me about my kit.

It turned out that skis and things were hired down at the bottom, not up at the Sundeck, and I felt the hand of Providence in this, for the chair-lift takes a good forty minutes each way. There would not be time. But the proverbial kindness of Americans to strangers had still to be reckoned with.

"Take my skis, and welcome," said the man in plaster, while the others began to press boots, gloves and goathair socks into my reluctant hands.

"No, no, no," I said. "No. It's extremely kind of you, but I

wouldn't dream—I should never forgive myself if I broke anything." Even after fifteen years one remembers how readily the tips of skis, among other things, snap off in an awkward fall.

"Aw!" they said, and I am sure they meant it. But I was firm. Self-denial is the basis of all genuine sport. And after much argument, followed by a discussion on American football in which the man with the shoulder-sprain put himself back a day or two, I tore myself out of a tackle and made for the lift.

Up by chair-lift, down by chair-lift—what has that got to do with honest physical culture? Nothing, luckily. But I very *nearly* ski-ed in the high Rockies. Which is more, in all probability, than Sorokin can say.

2 2

"The police . . . interviewed defendant, who after first denying taking the money later admitted the offence and returned the money to a policewoman which she produced from a bundle."

Warminster Journal

Of nerves, no doubt.

It Would Still Be Fun

BY VERNON BARTLETT

AT this time of year the travel agencies are dangerous. One peers through the fog—early English for "smog"—at their windows, bright with photographs of people ski-ing down sunny slopes and sending up clouds of powder snow behind them. There must have been a grand frost during the night to produce snow like that. That girl will take an awful toss in a moment—serves her right, with her legs stiff and rigid. Besides, what idiotic clothes to wear for ski-ing. That slope's pretty fast, but what fun it would be!

Would it be fun? Should I have the courage to try to slalom down a slope like that? Should I be able to look back and see a nice series of curves? Or should I be humiliated by a number of streaks across the snow, each terminated by an untidy hollow to mark where I had, cumbrously and ludicrously, swung first one slat of wood and then the other through a hundred and eighty degrees into the required direction? The question has only to be asked to be answered; it were kinder not to ask it.

Would it be fun? Those narrow,

deep ridges of rutted snow down some steep path through the forest! In my day there was not, I believe, a ski-hoist in the whole of Switzerland, and we had to herring-bone our way



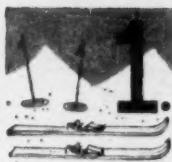
since you have no idea how to stop, no possibility of doing so except by falling down. And how with such ungainly things strapped to your feet, will you ever get up again? Then there is the magnificent sense of achievement when you discover that it is possible to stop yourself and yet to remain upright. The only turn I mastered was the Telemark, which went entirely out of fashion almost the moment I had done so. I cannot therefore tell you in detail how to become an expert. Besides, nowadays almost every beginner goes sensibly to school, and is taught on the nursery slope all the secrets of bend and balance we tried to learn from books.

Yes, of course it would be fun. Even anybody as unexpert as myself has his memories and his nostalgia. I can remember the unbelievable beauty of sun on snow; the blue shadow of the trees; the joy, at the end of a long climb, of stripping off one's clothes and rolling in the snow; the "Glühwein" drunk in the hot sunshine before the run home; the luxury of stretching out in a hot bath at the end of the run. Yes, of course it would be fun.

It wouldn't really—the last time I went out ski-ing I was brought home on a hurdle with a broken leg, and I should never have the nerve to start again. But those travel agencies are dangerous. They foster the wildest illusions.



Hints for Non-habitués of Winter Sports Centres



NEVER fret about not being the last word sartorially. Wear your boiler suit, your Land Army breeches, your War Department surplus gaiters, or whatever else

you've brought, with such an air and stare so fixedly through the aperture of your old Comforts Fund cap comforter at foreigners in supersonic trousers and caps with bubbles on the ends of strings that they will slink away feeling that *they* are the ones who look silly. They are too.

2. If you have come with the idea of buying your outfit out there, seek out some fellow countryman who (or whose wife) has run amok in the shops and cannot pay his hotel bill without selling you his ensemble on your terms. Don't, whatever you do, feel so sorry for this person that you allow him to sell you also his waterproof wrist-watch, his cuckoo clock, his hand-painted musical box, his early-morning tea-set, his braces and his carved bear.

3. Don't take evening dress. Not only are people in evening dress apt to be charged more for everything, but if there is one thing that really does look silly and can't be lived down in a room full of people in fur-lined boots and pullovers with processions of moose round the top, it is evening dress with plaster-of-paris sticking out of it.

4. Don't have tea with *pâtisseries*. Tea with *pâtisseries* except for teetotallers who have come abroad just to have tea with *pâtisseries* is far too costly. Tea should be eaten in private and consist of whatever can be surreptitiously diverted from the breakfast table. To make a really satisfactory job of this, use should be made of a large paper bag, a vacuum flask and a bedridden friend suffering from severe loss of appetite.

5. Wipe the snow off your boots outside your bedroom. Although it is good fun depositing neat little cubes of ice about the linoleum, not only does this cause extra work for the dear little maid with earrings but the cubes turn to water in the places

BY DANIEL PETTIWARD

where you put your feet in the morning.

6. When proceeding on skis from one point to another remember to have two handkerchiefs and to keep them in a different pocket from your small change. You will find that when you come to a planned or partially planned halt (totally unintentional halts are too big a subject to embark on here) you will badly want to wipe (a) your goggles and (b) your nose. Then you will find that your gloved fist is too fat to get into your pocket and that you will have to take your glove off and that by the time you have got it disengaged from the loop at the top of your ski-stick the people you were with are no longer with you. This will probably cause you to snatch hysterically at one of your handkerchiefs and if it is in the same pocket as your small change this will be showered extensively about the surrounding scenery, the smaller pieces in particular showing a tendency to sink like lead, which they are.

If either or both your handkerchiefs turn out to be deep down in the trousers pocket on the opposite side to your bared hand you will probably be best advised to make your way home by the shortest route and try again another day.

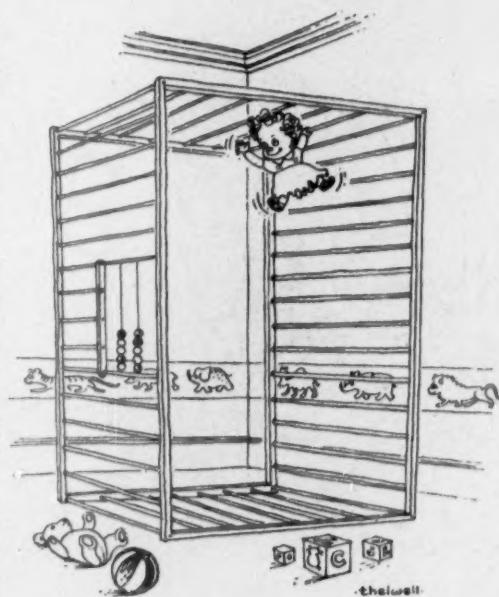
7. Before boasting to the dear little waitress with braided plaits about the masterly way you have completed the last fifty yards of the nursery slopes without actually falling right over until the very end, remember that from the age of five she has probably been accustomed to zooming down from the top of

the Bolsterhorn with a portmanteau under one arm and a milk churn under the other.

8. Don't imagine that by singing the first half of "Your-a-liatee" in a bass-type voice and the rest falsetto you are therefore yodelling.

9. Since during the course of your visit you are certain to knock down and seriously injure at least one foreign lady or gentleman, try to memorize some rather more heartfelt expression of regret than "*Pardon!*"

10. When sharing ski-lifts with strangers it is essential to ask them how long they have been in the resort and what they know about the condition of the snow on that particular day. Before starting to do this in fourth-form French or German it is as well to establish the nationality of the stranger, because if it turns out to be the person's first visit away from Fulham much embarrassment can be avoided. Usually it is possible to pick out from quite considerable distances the bristly moustaches, period costumes and snow-capped seats of fellow-countrymen; but, for some reason, on ski-lifts the most flagrant foreigners are nearly always English.



The Mode of the Mountains

BY ALISON ADBURGHAM



HEN the early Britons introduced Scandinavian skiing to Switzerland at the turn of this century they took their women-folk with them. These wives and sisters had a dress problem. At first they tackled it British fashion, by muddling through in their status clo's. The Ski Club of Great Britain has a photograph showing a group of ladies on skis in 1902. With skirts to the ankle, and obviously tight-laced, they could be in an Edwardian vicarage garden, assembled for a wagonette drive. And an illustrated advertisement of a "Lady's Ski Costume" which appeared eight years later shows that the tailors still had croquet in mind rather than a *sport vivant*.

It is not recorded what Miss Maitland wore in 1912 when she outraged propriety by beating her brother and other men in a ski competition at Mürren. She probably wore riding breeches, which were the first real step forward. There was danger in them, though, because women in breeches were apt to be spat at or stoned when they walked

through the villages; so Mr. Symonds of London designed a wrap-round skirt to wear over them. Once the lady ski-er was out on the slopes, alone with Mother Nature and her other relatives, she unhooked the skirt and handed it to husband or brother to be carried in his rucksack.

European peasants, however, are never so earthy as they like to be thought when it comes to financial matters. Very soon the Swiss villagers, in particular those in any way connected with the hotel trade, realized that the geese they were stoning were capable of laying golden eggs, a regular supply right through the winter months—just when eggs were scarce. This realization broadened their minds about feminine dress, and Mr. Symonds was able to turn his skill to designing trousers. These he made narrow, tapering, with elastic under the instep. For the Ladies' Ski Club, when it was founded in 1923, he made plus fours; and in the thirties the long loose trousers plus-twoing at the ankles were popular. Now everyone wants the *vorlages* of the Austrian guides, which are very similar to the design he first thought

of. His clients demand them against his better judgment, for only the exceptional woman has the figure of an Austrian guide, lean as a fork with the wind whistling through the prongs. It is one of the tragedies of modern times that a woman's worst blind spot is her own back view.

With the *vorlages* go the *anoraks*, in proofed poplin, gabardine, nylon, or Grenfell cloth. Some are reversible, two different coloured *anoraks* for the price of one. The zip is their updo: a long zip all the way up the front, or a short zip in a knitted neck yoke; zip cuffs, zipping-on-and-off hoods, zip pockets. Sometimes the zip pockets are pouchlike in centre front, the *anorak* then being known as a kangaroo jacket. *Anoraks* can be worn inside or outside the *vorlages*, but either way their length is sufficient to avoid the snow gap which is the fault of the short windjammers.

Although winter sports clothes are now nearly all unbespoke, ski-ers who go out year after year still have suits made to measure, nearly always black or bottle green, usually now with batwing sleeves: and with these experienced ski-ers there is the shade of a shadow of a tendency to return to plus fours. It is the downward pull of the *vorlages* with their elastic instep which some feel allows insufficient knee bend.

The ankle-length woollen underpants are on offer this season in the most unlingerie colours—royal blue, scarlet, yellow, black, imperial purple. Underpants for skiing could well be ouertights for pantomime—or jive dives. And those who remember the spencer vest of old will be startled to see its contemporary counterpart in colours to match the pants.

Very little evening dress appears in the hotels now except at Christmas and the New Year. Instead, black velvet drain-pipe trousers are worn, with slipper-socks over them (wool socks with a soft leather sole), and sometimes very full skirts as well, in felt or corduroy. Evening tops can be anything from a black sweater to a low-cut sequined blouse. One firm has fun with sneaker jeans, jersey





drain-pipes with a foot attached. Also tight-fitting jeans in leopard fur fabric. These should be certified inane. They are products of the same I.Q. which embroiders snowflakes on *anoraks* and the names of ski resorts on sweaters.

A hip-length spectator coat is an asset, full-length travel coats being impossible over *anoraks* or jeans; the proportion is wrong, the outline is bad, and against a white background silhouette is all-important. After-ski jackets in sheepskin lined with tartan, or in white nylon fur reversed with bright proofed poplin, look good in the shops. But even the most newly-washed sealyham looks very off-white on a snowy morning, and a tan sheepskin jacket, skin out fur in, might be a better choice, or a boxy jacket of tough plaid cloth.

Basics once secured—*vorlages*, *anorak*, oiled socks, boots, goggles, leather-palmed mitts, after-ski jacket

and slipper-socks or soft bootees—the sports minx can run merrily amok among the sweaters, scarves, caps, and all the woolly knitwitticisms; among the horrid little furry ear-muffs, among the belts with lunch-bags, the socks with ankle pads. It is pleasant to think that the mountains, which endure so much so silently, have their own back in the humbling no-man's time when the sun abruptly leaves the slopes. In that crepuscular half-hour such light as there is comes less from the sky than from the snow, and the figures upon it are no more colourful, no more individual, than the sombre pine trees in all their sameness. Feminine vanities, feline rivalries, are annulled—

*"But all is vanity, all the way;
Twilight follows the brightest day,
And every cat in the twilight's
grey,
Every possible cat."*

Animal, Vegetable or Liberal

PEERS, criminals and lunatics can't vote
But sit instead. Now as the usual storm
Stirs itself up in Westminster we note
How much the House neglects its own reform.
Why not, for instance, sponsor Parliament?
Or turn it into one vast parlour game,
Say *Sixty Questions, What do I think I Meant?*
Or for the famous ones *The Name's the Shame?*
Or add P.T. to the curriculum?
Encourage Euthanasia and dice?
Elect Professors? Or the deaf and dumb?
Or use it as a State-owned den of vice?*
Any of these if followed to the letter
Would leave the House itself, but rather better.

PETER DICKINSON

* Non-profit-making, of course





DIARY OF A TRAMP

Too Faithful Follower

BY RONALD DUNCAN

T'S sixteen years since I took to the road. During that time I've mixed with every sort of crook, spiv and vagabond.

I've consorted with horse nobblers on Newmarket Heath and have listened to ladder thieves boasting of mink. Smugglers in snow, coiners, forgers, not to mention honest-to-goodness burglars of the old school, have all taken me into their confidence at some time or another. There are few crimes I haven't heard about first hand in the long watches of the night as I've leant up against a coffee stall. And there's nothing like a night watchman's coke brazier to encourage one sinner to share his burden with another.

I don't know why people confide in me so readily. But they do, without reticence or modesty. I suppose they mistake my indifference for tolerance and my boredom for absolution. Whatever the reason I've often noticed that nothing seems to alleviate a conscience so much as exposing it to one's acquaintance. The pity is that the sin which they can admit to is seldom succulent enough to deserve a hearing.

But for all my experience with these criminals nobody has ever admitted to that thing which I myself must now confess. I fear it will put me completely beyond the pale. So if you suffer from a squeamish stomach I warn you not to read on. Though the brutalities of cosh gangs may not upset you, though murders and rapes both fail to shock you, my crime will make every Englishman turn away in disgust.

It is this: I don't like dogs. Not only big dogs and fierce dogs; I've always disliked all dogs, including small dogs, gay dogs and sheep dogs. The whole canine race is anathema to me. This dislike is nothing to do with my profession, though, of course, no gentleman of leisure approves of dogs which lurk in drives, or dogs which wake up the house just as one's easing oneself into the tool shed, barn or kitchen. No, I always

disliked these animals even before I became a freeman. I've never been able to tolerate their bark, but it's their insidious faithfulness which I've found most disquieting. A man may cast the world aside, but it's not so easy to get rid of one of these quadrupeds.

And now this damned hound has been following me all day. I first noticed it at Kilkhampton. Sensing my antipathy, it keeps a respectful distance and pads along some fifteen paces behind. It's a mongrel, something of an Irish terrier with the legs of a corgi.

I haven't been out poaching for days, so it can't be trailing any game in my pocket. And it looks far better fed than I am.

I turn into the quarry just outside Stratton to have a rest out of the wind. I've done ten miles already to-day. So has the mongrel too. There he sits now, watching me roll a fag, anticipating that gesture I'm determined not to make.

"Go home!" I shout angrily, for having broken from all ties I don't want to forge any others.

"Go on; go back where you belong. You'll get nothing out of me. It's no use looking like that, I haven't got anything to eat, and if I had you wouldn't get any. Now go on, go home!"

It merely wags its tail.

I must have picked it up at Hartland. I'd heard on the road from Bideford that the Forestry Commission had taken over Bursden Moor there, and were signing on casuals to plant out a hundred acres of Scotch fir and Japanese larch. And I had intended to stay around there for a couple of days to earn some bacey money. And perhaps a quid for a couple of pairs of socks. But I hadn't been able to stick the work because my feet got so cold standing on the wet moor. A case where, if I had had the

socks in the first place, I should have been able to go on working and earn enough money to buy what I didn't need. True, I did pick up a few bob, but that's bacey money, always the first necessity even before my poor feet.

There were about twenty of us there standing in a line out on the cold moor, waiting for the deep digger plough, hauled by a caterpillar tractor, to turn the next furrow. I've never seen a plough take such a deep bite, turning the rank sedge and rushes under the peat, which came up smooth and black, making the shear burnished like silver.

Then the gang would amble forward and heel the saplings in with a mattock. Most of the labourers were Irish . . . yes, maybe that's where I picked you up.

"Why don't you go back to your master, eh?"

I get up and move off towards Stratton. The mongrel follows, hoping I don't notice. As we enter the village I suddenly find myself going into a butcher's and forgoing an ounce of bacey by buying a bob's-worth of bones.

"There you are, you brute, confound your pathetic eyes."



"Natasha in love with you? Don't make me laugh!"

The Polar Synthesis

EDITED BY DOROTHY L. SAYERS

A Sermon for Cacophony-Tide

(Reprinted from the Schismminster Perish Magazine)

MY LITTLE PERISHERS,
Cacophony is the seed-time of the Polar Year. Not, of course, the dilatory seed-time of conquered and discredited Nature! But as from the refrigerator we cull fresh peas in December and ice-cream in July, so we may plant the seeds of enmity all the year round, but especially in Cacophony-tide. Scarcely is Wishmas* over, with all its factitious heartiness and family friction, before bills and income-tax demands come in. Tempers are frayed, the weather is uniformly



may, if sown with envy, watered with complaints, sprayed with clouds of verbiage and artificially heated with unrighteous indignation, grow into a lofty and isolated Pole, up which you may climb to look down upon your neighbours.

Last week Stepfather Munchgrief gave you valuable guidance on the propagation of domestic strife; to-day I will say a few words on the subject of Polar apologetics.

Remember, when cultivating your cold-bed of Polemic: never define, never expound, never discuss: only assert and assume. Where there is dogma, there is always a possible basis for agreement; where there is explanation, there is always the peril of mutual understanding; where there is argument there may be victory and the dreadful prospect of peace. Again, it is often unwise, and always unnecessary, to invite examination into the merits of your case: far better to rely on a devout invocation of the sacred authorities. "Science tells us—"; "Progress demands—"; "Modern Thought goes to show—": phrases such as these,

uttered with a condescending smile, are far less answerable and provoke infinitely greater irritation.

Be especially careful when baiting Neo-Scholastics and other superstitious theologians, never to have studied their doctrines—it will only cramp your style and offer them a handle for controversy. You need only pick up at third hand enough of their technical jargon to use it inaccurately, and so make rational debate impossible. Follow the example of the Blessed St. Hydra, and when your adversary has hewn away (as he thinks) one misconception, let two sprout in its place: that will tire out his patience. Strive earnestly to confuse every issue: there are no injuries so estranging as those that are dealt in the dark by men who do not know what the quarrel is about.

One final warning: do not fall into the error of intellectual intolerance. Reserve your resentment for people, not for ideas. Polarity thrives upon the diffusion of irresponsible opinions, which—if allowed to flourish unchecked—may easily grow into ideological tyrannies and nourish feuds of global dimensions. Any effort to oppose a new idea on the specious pretext that it is nasty, false, dangerous or wrong should be promptly stigmatized as heresy-hunting, mediæval obscurantism, or suburban prejudice. If the idea is, in fact, silly or untrue, all the better: you will then be able to sneer impartially at both those who hold and those who condemn it, and thus to enhance that sense of your own superiority which is the sole aim and reward of all Polar activity.

Let us continue, then, on the up-and-up—from rod to perch, from perch to pole—till at last, by modern

Collect for the 3rd Sunday in Cacophony

OMISCONSTRUCTION, that art the author of hate and lover of friction, in juggling with whom standeth our perpetual strife, and whose service is stark unreason; assist us, thy aggressive shock-troops, in all our assaults upon accuracy, that we, being practised in giving offence, may not fear the power of any argument; through the sleight of thy misleading words. *Amen.*

scientific use of our own bootstraps, we shall rise to our supreme height of lordly stature, no longer dependent on any man, or even on the gods of our own invention, but every one of us in his own exclusive right exalted over every other.

*Preached on the Feast of the Decollation of St. Hydra
by the Irrev. Garble Skimmer at the Perish Centre of
St. Cloud the Obscure, Schismminster.*

*Wishmas. This festival, which has almost everywhere superseded the superstitious commemoration of Christmas, is celebrated by domestic agglomerations and by the exchange of cards, bearing wishes for the recipients' material prosperity, and frequently adorned with ice, snow, holly and other Polar symbols.



"Setting by Breughel—special effects by Henry Moore."

Bike for Sale



Y despair was beyond expression. Neither the back streets of Bradford, nor seven years in the Army, nor a working knowledge of three languages could give me the words I needed. I stood by the roadside at 1.30 a.m., three miles from home, heavy rain plastering my hair down, fingers numb and darkness all around. The back wheel of my bicycle had developed corners.

One minute I was pedalling against the rain. I had made a speech at a by-election. The morrow being Saturday I could lie in. I was not happy—no one can be happy on a bicycle in the small hours of a wet night—but I was attuned to my misery. The next moment I was in the ditch. My back wheel was a mess of spokes like metallic spaghetti and the rim was more square than round. In the seventeenth century, mathematicians spent years in attempts to square the circle. I did it in two seconds flat.

I lumped the bike on my

BY WILFRED FIENBURGH

shoulders. "I am a failure," I thought. Twenty years ago when I was fourteen I had broken the wheel of my very second-hand bike on the road between Knaresborough and Harrogate. Over the high hill at Yeadon, down through the valley in a rainstorm, over the greasy cobblestones of outlying villages on a bleak Sunday evening I had lugged, pushed and dragged the wreckage. Around me the roads grew quiet. The lights on the hillsides disappeared as folk went to bed. The last tram careened into the sheds at the terminus, and a ghostly city of glistening pavements saw me pushing still. That was twenty years ago. And in the matter of mechanical locomotion I had not progressed. I was still fighting the stubborn recalcitrance of a very broken, very second-hand bike. In the dark. In the rain.

Last time it happened I got a new bike. Half a crown down and one and sixpence a week. It had handlebars that dipped like a ram's horns and a saddle that elevated my posterior above my head. The tyres

smelled of new rubber. The wheels hummed as they turned. It shone. I used it more for show than for travel. It gave glory to my days and delight to the summer evenings. I sold it in 1940 to my platoon sergeant for ten bob and the right to dodge spud-bashing parades.

This time, I reflected, as I shifted the thing from the groove it had worn in my right shoulder, I deserved something better. I would buy a new wheel with one of those built-in motors. Thirty pounds it would cost. Of course I had not got a loose thirty pounds, but I could raise ten. Maybe I could do it for ten pounds down and something each week.

But the hill to my home is steep and I am heavy. Perhaps I needed something more powerful. Perhaps I ought to use the thirty pounds I was going to spend on a mechanical wheel as down payment on a new motor bike. I could see myself roaring up the hill with an open exhaust at seventy m.p.h.

Then I remembered the crash I had in 1940 near Saffron Walden and



the dreadful second I shall carry with me through eternity when I realized that the oncoming truck was going to hit me and nothing but divine intervention could save me. The divinity did not intervene. I remembered the time I went through a hedge near Salisbury while racing a Canadian D.R. I remembered when I got the wheel caught in the tram lines down the Old Kent Road. In two years I cost the Army about £600 in motor bikes.

Why not use the £120 a motor bike would cost as down payment on a small new car? That was the answer. If we stopped eating I could manage the installments.

I rested near the canal. The water shone in the fitful moonlight. As I was going to buy a small new car I would not need the bike. I was tempted to throw it in. But I caught sight of my new lighting set. Pity to waste a new lighting set. I plodded on.

Of course, with a large family I would be cramped in a small car. Better get a big one. The local paper was advertising a second-hand limousine for £800. If I used the £450 a small car would cost as down payment on the limousine I could ride in comfort. I visualized a touching little scene at the House of Commons. "Can I give you a lift, Clem? No trouble. My limousine is outside."

As I struggled on through the rain, doubt began to nag. Second-hand cars can be troublesome. If I used the £800 the second-hand limousine would cost, as down payment on a new one costing, say, £3,500, I could enjoy trouble-free motoring for years.

That was the answer. I was happy. Everything was solved. I even whistled on the last mile home.

This morning, therefore, I took firm action to deal with my travelling troubles. I took possession of my wife's bicycle. Would anyone like to buy a good, solid, gent's bike with a square back wheel?



Short Story

"Lost on Boxing Day, hunting cap, between Brockhampton School and the Hospital."

The Bromyard News and Record

Eighty in the Sun

For William Somerset Maugham, born January 25, 1874



*I bask in Antibes and in honour, and consider the works of my pen
That have made me in one full lifetime all things to all literate men:
The rich man's MARIE CORELLI, the poor man's ANDRÉ GIDE,
A STEVENSON told of the facts of life, a KIPLING shorn of his creed.
O, I was TERENCE RATTIGAN when TERENCE was still in his cot,
And the films and TV will call on me when USTINOV's long forgot.
Though the Ale I brewed was bitter, my Cakes were as sweet as sin,
And they brought me the Moon I sighed for, with a bit over Sixpence thrown in.
The world's delectable secrets turned to Ashenden in my mouth,
And the fetters of Human Bondage hold me fast in the suns of the south.*

B. A. YOUNG

Beat Me, Little Father, Eight to a Bar

IT'S hard to tell, away from my copy of the *Hulton Readership Survey*, the size and fervour of my following in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. I can only hope that it includes at least one poet, because I am writing this for him.

The front pages of our Western Press have been jubilating considerably (dear unknown friend, or may I call you Boris?) over the news that your leaders have removed controls from jazz. But something tells me that you are jubilating rather less. Your motherland—I feel I can be frank—knows no middle paths, and a cultural pursuit, like any other, is either forbidden or obligatory; as I see it, therefore, the Kremlin bull really marks the transference of jazz into the second category. As I write, Moscow's gramophone shops are no doubt under siege from many eminent musicians, all offering a bag of roubles for cracked records of the Savoy Orpheans in "I Can't Get Over a Girl Like You Loving a Boy Like Me"—and you, I am sure, are peering over their shoulders, praying for guidance in the New Poesy, or, as we call it here, the Lyric.

I sympathize, Boris, and I want to help. With jazz a must, after being for so long a mustn't, you face a new and awesome adventure.

Look on the bright side. The nightmare of the English and American lyricists has always been their language's poverty in rhymes for such simple monosyllables as "love" and "moon." This narrowed their intellectual field insufferably, with references to "the sky above" a *sine qua non*, and the month of June worn to tatters. You, I fancy, are

BY J. B. BOOTHROYD

better placed. The Russian tongue is superlatively rich in identical word-endings, and a quickly scribbled calculation shows me that if our Mr. Walker had produced a Russian sequel to his (indispensable) rhyming dictionary we should have had three hundred pages of "inks" alone.

But you will have problems elsewhere. The jazz lyric demands sentiment of the most unequivocal kind, and while our emotional western civilizations have never lacked young men willing to twine round a microphone and declare

"You're my griddle,
I'm your egg,
Baby, let's get hot . . ."

the virile young men of the east may come forward less readily. At first, until jazz commissars with full compulsive powers are appointed, this may mean that your lyrics must fall slightly below our standards of unself-consciousness. Remember, in this case, that ordinary family sentiment is by no means inadmissible as a substitute: old mothers can often be featured with success (have you a rough equivalent to Ireland in your part of the world?), and even their old mothers. A verse beginning,

"Grandmama, Grandmama,
Polish up your samovar,

A little lady's coming in to tea," would not be out of place even in the sophisticated nightspots of Broadway; and its seemliness, even on the lips of a Hero of the Red Army, is incontestable.

Over the poets of our own Charing Cross Road, at any rate, you have another valuable advantage—a wealth of colourful place-names. This throws open to your pen the vast mental arena of local patriotism, which has done such wonders for Alabama, Arizona, Buffalo, St. Louis, Chicago, California, San Francisco and Chattanooga (while, alas, leaving the potentialities of Rugely or Hemel Hempstead virtually unexplored). Consider your own resources. From my map of the U.S.S.R. it is a little difficult to assess the civic eminence of your

towns, as it has been drawn to the parsimonious scale of 1:40,000,000, but of their euphony there can be no doubt. I would select, at a rough glance, a list headed by Chelyabinsk, Bobruisk, Petropavlovsk, Kondopoga and Syktykvar—to say nothing of the delightful Dzhugdzhur Range, so happily suggesting the saga of some old Okhotsk cowhand, urging his dogie along the purple foothills to the twang of a balalaika.

For the exploitation of these beauties I would recommend the waltz form. And at this point I would warn you, Boris, not to be tempted by rash composers to degrade this form for comedy and/or propaganda purposes; it is a form sacred in the west to sentiment; remember that your incursion into this new field may prove a powerful cultural link with the North American Continent—it would not seem too wild, indeed, to suggest that your Georgiy ("Hot-lips") Malenkov had this in mind all the time—and hard-won goodwill could be demolished overnight by a waltz-lyric running

"Natasha shot ninety guerrillas,

But none of them suffered like me."

No, for the waltz, stick to the place-name. Oddly enough, as my eye wanders northwards over the map, a lyric comes to me in its entirety, place-name and all:

"I met you one day,
Beside a frozen bay,
ON OCTO-O-BER REVOLU-U-UTION
ISLAND.

I gave you my heart,
We vow'd we'd never part,
ON OCTO-O-BER REVOLU-U-UTION
ISLAND.

There slightly north of Siberia,
Love was one long sweet hysteria,
But you went away,
And skies all turned to grey
ON OCTO-O-BER REVOLU-U-UTION
ISLAND:

I shall make you a present of that one, Boris, to prove that I wish you well. (You might consider calling it "October Revolution Island.") Good luck, anyway, and I hope you make it—also your colleagues on the musical side. You never know, we may hear shortly that Shostakovich has invented the boogie-woogie bass.



PLUS ÇA CHANGE



TOLPUDDLE, 1834



SCUNTHORPE, 1954



BOOKING OFFICE What the Well-Dressed Man is Believing

This I Believe. Hamish Hamilton, 12/6

ANY young man setting out to make some hubbub in the world would do well to equip himself with a set of easily remembered Beliefs. It is untrue, as some unsuccessful aspirants to fame contend, that an absence of creed gives room for profitable manœuvring. Indeed, a man without a creed is generally considered to be a man without principle, while he who commits himself to a few simple truths is reputed to base his every act on deeply felt conviction, not on lust for gain—nor need such explicitness prove hampering in practice.

There has recently appeared a collection of "The personal philosophies of one hundred thoughtful men and women" as they were broadcast for the uplift of the United States and its well-wishers. Fifty of the Believers are British and fifty are American, while all are eminent; for had invitations been issued to the meeker sort there might have been such variety among the opinions expressed that the book would have proved unsettling to its readers. Scarce an expected name is missing, with the inexplicable exception of Lord Samuel. It is curious to note that the similarities are greater between the Americans than between the British—among those to whom nonconformity is a principle than among those to whom it is a practice.

The earnest seeker who, lacking beliefs of his own, is looking out for a serviceable set, may find these testimonies less helpful than the historian, for whom they may provide valuable evidence of the age's fashions in creeds, although he will find the hundred thinkers not completely representative even of those who have made some noise in the world. It is but natural that a programme supported not only by something called *Help Inc.* but also by the State Department should ignore the views of Communists

and their allies, even though their pernicious doctrines extend over nearly half the globe.

It is less understandable that, in a time when political views are held with such fervency, politics are ignored. Even Mr. Aneurin Bevan devotes most of his space to laying the groundwork for the declaration "I believe imaginative tolerance to be among the foremost virtues of a civilized mind." The historian will

refered to as the Friar Tuck of British politics, is on the side of "justice, liberty, decency, toleration and humanity." He claims to be "a buttress rather than a pillar of the Church" and evokes a picture of a churchyard with the friar using his massive bulk in desperate efforts to save the sacred edifice from bulging.

Some of the Believers use most of their space on affirmation and abstract nouns. Mr. Louis B. Seltzer, of whom we are told that he edits the Scripps-Howard newspapers of Ohio and belongs to nearly every club in Cleveland, is so impressed by his beliefs that he begins a new paragraph with each sentence. Some introduce anecdotes and reminiscences. "One day about fifteen years ago I suddenly came face to face with myself," begins Mr. Albert J. Nesbitt, the President of John J. Nesbitt Inc., who is "at once a hard-headed business man and a warm-hearted human." Mr. Tyrone Guthrie, who discovered at Oxford that his height of six feet five inches was a handicap in acting, opens with the statement, "If you go sufficiently far north on this planet you will eventually arrive at the North Pole. Then if you continue moving in the same direction you will, paradoxically, find you are moving south." Later he says he believes that "God and the Devil are merely aspects of the same idea." Viscount Kemalay speaks in the highest terms of The Family and in particular of his own. His parents "placed the deep imprint of their personalities on all their children." The note says "He has published a Manual of Journalism that is regarded as definitive," but does not say by whom.

The Believers who catch the attention are not always the Believers one would have expected. Mr. James Hilton has vivacity and freshness. Sir Miles Thomas is almost the only contributor who reflects contemporary assumptions, enthusiasms and limitations. Less surprisingly, Mr. Peter Ustinov's language is living, shapely and provocative and must



discover other gaps. No Believer mentions the Roman Catholic Church or the Arts as the centre of his creed, though many of our finest spirits have poured out their devotion to them.

Among the American Believers Mr. William L. Shirer is typical. He is in favour of "having an inner life, which no outside storm or evil turn of fortune can touch." He admits that a good inner life is difficult to achieve: "You have to have patience and understanding. And, when you can, seek God." In similar vein Miss Peggy Wood says "If I am too puny to grasp the cosmic contours I believe I can at least live my faith within my own small orbit."

This cosy privacy and seeking of comfort in detachment is found throughout, though perhaps rather more in the transatlantic contributors, our fellow-countrymen being slightly more aware of those around them. Sir Robert Boothby, who, the biographical note reveals, has been

have given pain to the worthy sponsors. Provided words are drab, creeds can vary considerably without doing harm or anything at all; but once language comes to life, creeds may issue in action and the even surface of undenominational platitudes be shivered into sharpness.

Some Believers find they can manage to accept God; some cannot, but protest that they can believe nearly everything that would follow from God's existence. Few give any example of the kind of action to which their creed might lead. It will be the total effect of the confessions, the twilight cast by them, that will make it essential for the student of our civilization.

R. G. G. PRICE

A Diversity of Plants. Patrick Syng. *Geoffrey Bles*, 16/-.

In Your Garden Again. V. Sackville-West. *Michael Joseph*, 15/-.

The disappearance of cheap labour and cheap coke for greenhouses has, as Mr. Syng points out, put an end to elaborate bedding schemes for private gardens (though floral clocks and coats of arms still linger in the rate-supported gardens of seaside resorts). With this in mind the editor of the Royal Horticultural Society's *Journal* has devoted most of his well-illustrated book to plants and shrubs from which good results may be obtained by intelligent planting rather than by hard labour and hand-weeding.

Miss V. Sackville-West, in her articles from the *Observer*, approaches the same problem from the point of view of a gardener who only recommends a flower or shrub when she likes it personally, for she can be quite sharp in her dislike of blowsy climbing roses. She has unusual ideas such as growing ornamental gourds to cover a fence, or making a hedge of vines. It is pleasant to be reminded of the subtle charm of the green-flowered hellebores in winter. Later in the year we are rightly urged to pick marrows when they are four inches long. In an appendix there is a valuable list of nurserymen.

V. G. P.

The Victorian Mountaineers. Ronald Clark. *Batsford*, 18/-.

The Victorians went to the Alps for a variety of reasons. Geologists, like Tyndall, came to study and stayed to worship; clergymen and agnostics, like Leslie Stephen, found in climbing an emotional support or substitute for orthodox belief; Whymper conquered peaks for the sake of conquest. Others sought primarily the enjoyment of natural beauty, the pleasure of physical activity, or a respite from urban life.

Mr. Clark's book is rather untidily put together, and his prose sometimes falls below the dignity of the *Alpine Journal*. He gives detail where it is not wanted, and he does not answer

all the questions which his subject raises. His climbers, for instance, would be more interesting as climbers if their other activities were less perfunctorily described. But there is entertainment here and a revealing glimpse of a fascinating subject. The photographs, in appropriate sepia, are delightful.

A. M.

Touch and Go. Jacobine Hichens. *Putnam*, 12/6

This novel occasionally suggests that Miss Hichens might be capable of greater literary effort. Her story, in so far as there is any story behind this picture of young people falling in and out of love, shows us a girl's disillusioning discovery of the immorality of the dominating uncle who has influenced her youth. Janet, the niece, is a brave attempt to draw a nice, natural girl, but, alas, niceness is hard to portray and Janet remains colourless to the last. The author is more successful with naughty Emma and nasty Berenice, and it is these two who give us hope for Miss Hichens' literary future.

An undisturbing novel for the library list.

O. M.

The House of Angelo. J. D. Aylward. *Batchworth Press*, 18/-.

The dynasty of Angelo is famous in the fencing world. Its founder, Domenico, arrived from Leghorn as a lover of Peg Woffington, and took service with the tenth Earl of Pembroke. George II called him the most elegant rider in Europe, and he taught equitation and fencing to the Royal family. In 1764 he established the most fashionable fencing school in London. His *Ecole des Armes* was the first manual to treat the art as one of poise and exercise rather than of polite murder. He became fencing-master at Eton, where his daughter was for many years a Dame.

His son, Harry, a more roisterous but less sympathetic character, with a penchant for the stage, moved in the flashier circles of Regency London. He wrote dubious reminiscences and devised a cutlass drill for the Navy. The third Angelo abandoned the more raffish tradition of the family and became Superintendent of Sword Exercise to the Army. Mr. Aylward depicts them all with gusto.

J. E. B.

on their heads, and both sexes were doomed by the Charleston to a suicide pact between runaway mechanical dolls, is a piece of calculated brutality. But if we must be reminded, then *The Boy Friend* is the kindest way to do it.

This delicious satire on the musical comedies of the period comes to the West End from the Players' Theatre, via a triumphant season at the Embassy, and all of it is the work of one young man, SANDY WILSON, whose achievement is to lay bare the absurdities of a convention while giving us an entertainment charming in itself. Naturally the big comedian who was the chief magnet in such shows (who will forget Leslie Henson in *Funny Face*?) is absent, but Mr. WILSON's finishing school for English girls at Nice has its own gaiety and vitality, and several of his tunes and lyrics would have been snapped up at the time by any manager who knew his business. The dances, arranged with a cruelly accurate memory by JOHNS HEAWOOD, are wonderfully funny. REGINALD WOOLLEY's dresses leave one despondent for the human race. VIDA HOPE's production exhumes with tender care forgotten tricks in song and movement, and the pastiche is the stronger for being played straight, or very nearly so. It dips in the second act, but this slight failure can be forgiven in the pleasures of the third—the best.

The Players' is a notable acid-bath, and its starless team is agile in parody. ANNE ROGERS plays the bashful heroine (daughter to a millionaire) who talks like an advertisement; ANTHONY HAYES the messenger boy (heir—you have guessed it—to a peerage) who wins her at first sight; JOAN STERNDALE BENNETT, a little reminiscent of Beatrice Lillie, is the romantic headmistress with a past; "VIOLETTA" the exuberant French



AT THE PLAY

The Boy Friend (WYNDHAM'S)
Crime and Punishment (ARTS)

NOSTALGIA for the 1920s could only be a grave pathological symptom. To remind us of days when girls were flat and sacklike and went to tea-dances with their waists round their knees and candle-snuffers



"Ma—Daddy's broken his
New Year resolution."

maid; and DENISE HIRST the school's prime coquette (an alpha on her report). As the heroine's father, sharing his past with the headmistress, HUGH PADICK has few of the comic opportunities he exploited so well in *The Two Bouquets*, but his period style is impeccable.

London is in luck here.

Crime and Punishment is one of the novels which should baffle the adaptor, yet which by some minor miracle have been transferred to the stage with surprising success. Rodney Ackland's version just after the war caught the essence of DOSTOEVSKY remarkably, but the great production was the one GASTON BATY brought to London in 1934. JOHN FERNALD has followed this closely, using BATY's adaptation and an admirably simple multiple set by RONALD BROWN. Although in twenty scenes, the result is a tense play. Compression robs it of much of the subtlety of Raskolnikoff's long journey from arrogance to submission, but enough comes through of the feeling and force of the novel to leave a powerful impression.

What is mainly missing is the intellectual pride which leads Raskolnikoff to believe himself so far above the moral law that he can kill with impunity. Even at the start he is a frightened rabbit, all nerves and staring eyes. This condition rather takes the sting out of his interviews with the Chief of Police, who cannot

fail to spot him as the murderer, but so far as it goes KENNETH GRIFFITH makes it effective; his scenes with Sonia (the reluctant prostitute who brings him to an understanding of suffering) are fine. She is a twister for any actress, but the kind of numb spirituality with which ROSALIND BOXALL plays her gets near the real Dostoevsky. HAROLD KASKET's suavely hypnotic policeman and NICHOLAS AMER's friendly Dmitri are both good. There is a touching performance by KENNETH HYDE as Marmeladoff, the battered drunk, and GLADYS BOOT is at home with Madame Raskolnikoff. But the final credit must go to JOHN FERNALD, for his skill in handling a mass of characters, in grouping them memorably and in capturing so much of so elusive an atmosphere.

ERIC KEOWN

*The Boychik—The Bespoke Overcoat
(EMBASSY)*

The Boychik is a fairly conventional prodigal-son piece, set in a derelict East End theatre where various indigent Russian Jews maintain their knife-edge existences. It lacks the individuality one would have expected from the author, who seems unable to convey something that he himself clearly feels. Mr. Wolf Mankowitz, in fact, is not yet a dramatist. He must pursue, above all, economy; *The Boychik* is a one-act play in two acts, *The Bespoke Overcoat*, which follows, a revue-sketch in one act. When

Mr. Mankowitz has learnt what to omit, both from dialogue and plot, he will have progressed far towards harnessing his undoubted talent.

The Bespoke Overcoat, previously seen at the Arts, is much more theatrical, original and entertaining than the newer piece; but again, much is said that should be implied. Both plays were well, though not always audibly, performed, and it was certainly no fault of the cast that I was left at the end feeling as intrusive as a gnat at a synagogue.

B. A. Y.

Recommended

Readers with legal and criminal tendencies will find rich food for thought in *Witness for the Prosecution* (Winter Garden), *Someone Waiting* (Globe), and *Carrington, V.C.* (Westminster).



AT THE PICTURES

The Moon is Blue
The Band Wagon

NOBODY could call *The Moon is Blue* (Director: OTTO PREMINGER)

an important film, but I think it is a very enjoyable one, and all the "moral" fuss about it in the U.S. seems merely fatuous. Supporters of censorship always make a great point of its being more necessary with films than with literature because of the much greater power of the visual image; but it seems that the trouble with this film in the U.S. (and even the version showing here, though it is labelled "X", has two or three noticeable small cuts—for which one instantly puzzles out a motive) was largely verbal. Apparently eyes need not be shielded from such words as "seduction," "virgin," "mistress," but ears must be.

I did not see the original play; this, though it shows clear signs of its stage origin, is very much more of a film than that might suggest. But it still comes under the broad classification of "brittle comedy"—whatever "brittle" may mean in that connection (I have never been sure, but it seems to convey the right idea). The dialogue is quick and amusing and nearly all the speeches are extremely brief.

And the piece depends very much on light, confident playing, particularly that of the central character, an oddly charming girl who in the person of MAGGIE McNAMARA suggests a combination of Audrey Hepburn and Betsy Drake. This wide-eyed and flatly outspoken young woman is picked up in the observation tower of the Empire State Building by an architect (WILLIAM HOLDEN) of perhaps questionable intentions and goes back with him to his apartment, where she is protected both from him and his friend the "amiable wolf" from the flat above (DAVID NIVEN) by her matter-of-fact innocence and virtue.



Maisie—MISS DENISE HIRST

Polly Browne—MISS ANNE ROGERS
Madame Dubonnet—MISS JOAN STERNDALE BENNETT



Patty O'Neill—MAGGIE McNAMARA

Don Gresham—WILLIAM HOLDEN

(The Moon is Blue)

After a great deal of entertaining backchat in which the situation is displayed, sincerity breaks in: she accepts the young man's proposal of marriage.

That's all; but so beautifully is it done, so perfectly is the mood kept, so smoothly skilful is the shift of the camera eye and so crisply amusing the dialogue, that one's interest and pleasure are unbroken. I enjoyed it very much.

The Band Wagon (Director: VINCENZO MINNELLI) is one of those huge spectacular musicals, miscellaneous, uneven, unsatisfactory considered as a whole but crammed full of brilliantly entertaining oddments and immensely impressive as a technical job.

The title of course is justified merely as that of the climactic stage show in the making of which all the characters are concerned. As we see it, this is a string of apparently isolated numbers—though there is quite a to-do, at the beginning of the picture, about a story into which they are all supposed to fit. FRED ASTAIRE appears as a song-and-dance man, CYD CHARISSE as the great ballerina with whom he is teamed in a musical, JACK BUCHANAN as the roaring genius of the theatre who directs it.

The pattern is one of backstage comedy alternating with spectacular items on those acres of polished floor that the film audience is always willing to take for an ordinary stage, and there are good things in both categories.

MR. BUCHANAN, as well as joining in song and dance, has one or two extremely funny episodes without music, and MR. ASTAIRE shows all the old brilliance in some splendid dances both with Miss CHARISSE and on his own. The whole thing, whatever it may not be, is undeniably (as a lively chorus here puts it) "en—ter—TAIN—ment."

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

In London: The second Cinema-Scope picture, *How to Marry a Millionaire*, much better than the first; *The Million Pound Note* (13/1/54), a highly enjoyable fable of fifty years ago; and *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (13/1/54), a cheerful spectacular musical with much good fun. *Julius Caesar* (18/11/53) and *M. Hulot's Holiday* (25/11/53) continue.

Releases include *Meet Mr. Lucifer* (9/12/53)—not a top-flight Ealing comedy, but quite amusing—and *Sangaree* (22/7/53), a Technicolor costume melodrama not improved by 3-D.

RICHARD MALLETT

AT THE GALLERY

The Dufy Collection (TATE)

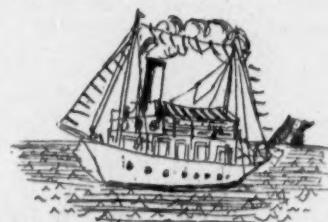
RAOUL DUFLY was a fortunate man. His career coincided with the vogue, which he helped to create, for modern French painting; and he started his artistic training in good hands at an early age, as is proved by a self-portrait (No. 1) painted in 1898, when he was twenty-one years old, at Le Havre, the town of his birth. Broadly and deftly treated, the canvas

shows him as an already accomplished academic painter.

Subsequently he moved to Paris, where, to his great advantage, his colour sense became enlivened by contact with the daring paintings of Van Gogh and Matisse. An assiduous student, he was always finding new fields of interest and inspiration in ancient manuscripts, pottery, and tapestries, as well as in painting pure and simple. His decorative sense and draftsmanship obtaining for him adequate employment as a designer for silk merchants and illustrator of books, he was able to enjoy a further period of probation.

At length admirably equipped, and with an incomparable zest for life, he widened the sphere of his activities and without forsaking his usual themes, often the simplest hotel or studio interiors and land and sea vistas, he began to embrace, as well, the playgrounds of the rich. Deauville, Cowes, Ascot and Nice—he knew them all. With his personal short-hand style which he went on developing all his life, a curious mixture of painting and drawing in which line and colour were always struggling for ascendancy in a fascinating contest, he summarized the gayer scenes of life between the wars. Always witty in thought and vigorous in execution, he never descended to the purely whimsical or chic. Nor, when his work had the powerful impact of a poster, which was sometimes his aim, was he capable of the least vulgarity.

It is true that the limited degree of realistic representation and frequent poetic licence which he employed will always cause factual prigs and pedants to fulminate about their children being able "to do better than that." And



timid souls who think that an artist should only enter the portals of plutocracy with the shy gait of a curate in a night-club will sneer enviously at his ability to get away with it in the tough worlds of sport and international society. Others imbued with the vice of easy denigration have dubbed him "only a decorator," a curiously inconsistent term of reproach for one whose aim was to decorate.

For those, however, with a modicum of imagination and discernment, who do not feel that sensibility must always be dim and reticent, the eighty odd works assembled at the Tate (the

Exhibition closes on February 7) show Dufy as a fine, ripe personality stemming from the past, gracing the term "modern," and producing for all too short a period of fifty years a constant stream of elegant and enlivening works.

Recommended

"The Grand Tour Italy 1700-1800" at the Tooth Gallery, 31 Bruton Street (closes February 6), contains fine works by Canaletto, Richard Wilson and other less known but delightful artists.

ADRIAN DAINTREY



ON THE AIR

Seeing it Through

LAST Sunday a popular journalist began his weekly article with the words "You had better stay indoors for a week," said the doctor," and I immediately recognized an apologetic gambit introducing a discourse on television. For some reason or other televiewing is still regarded as a low-brow pursuit, something that one should admit to only among one's closest friends. "Well, no, I haven't a TV set myself," says A, "though my son has, and I can hardly avoid seeing the thing sometimes." "Yes, I bought one last Christmas for the sitter-in," says B.

Television was bound to generate snobbishness of some kind. Here is a form of entertainment available to all. There is nothing exclusive about it: it makes no appeal to the minority-minded, and it is a poor peg for smart conversation. Ask certain people outright whether or not they have seen a particular programme and they blush—"Not all of it," they say. "Just switched on when we got back from the concert. Why, was it ghastly?"



"Switch on . . . Switch off."

Professor Bodkin in Animal, Vegetable, Mineral.

It is quite true that many television programmes are ghastly, but so too are many films, plays, novels, evenings of ballet, opera and orchestral music. Television gets more than its share of criticism for two reasons: because it is a new medium competing with cut-and-dried professional stage and screen performances and doing so with very limited and often amateurish resources; and because to the viewer it is such a cheap form of entertainment.

When people go to the theatre they set out with high hopes and in their best bibs and tuckers. They are determined to enjoy themselves. The jaunt will cost a lot of money and all

will be lost if the play turns out to be a flop. So theatre-goers tend to be charitable, tolerant, to laugh extravagantly at the slightest opportunity and to praise as a masterpiece any play or film that keeps them awake. I don't think I have ever left a theatre before the final curtain, but I often switch off televised plays before the end of Act I.

Switch on . . . switch off. It is so easy to turn from televiewing to some other occupation—to pick up the novel, the newspaper or the cards. We do not quit the theatre at the first sign of boredom: we stay on, sit it out, and struggle to keep hope alive in our breasts. But with television we have only to lean forward and apply a little pressure to one of the switches. "Had enough?" we say to our fellow-viewers.

Of course there are times when the television set is left on even though the programme is failing to claim the viewers' undivided attention, and I am now able to gauge the success of an item merely by the demeanour of my co-watchers. One sign of failure is the request: "May we have the other light on, please?" This means, may we improve the room's illumination so that we can embroider or tackle a crossword puzzle?

There was no demand for extra light during the programme "Missing from Home" which turned out to be a bright and informative documentary on the work of the Salvation Army's international investigation department. A number of fictitious case-histories were dramatized very cleverly, without excessive sentiment or heartiness, and the viewer was left to speculate upon the piquant possibilities of "June" Patterson's reunion with her mother. A little more spit and polish in its preparation and this programme would have earned an alpha.

BÉRNARD HOLLOWOOD



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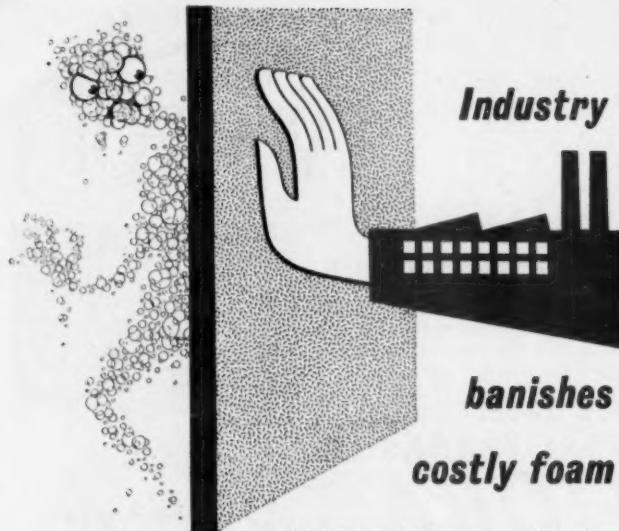
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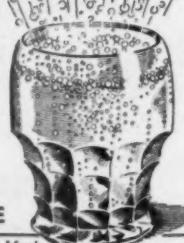
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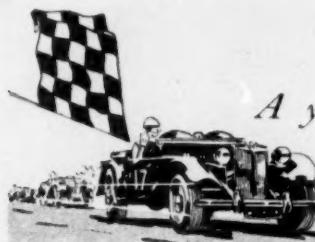
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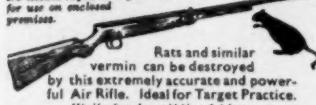
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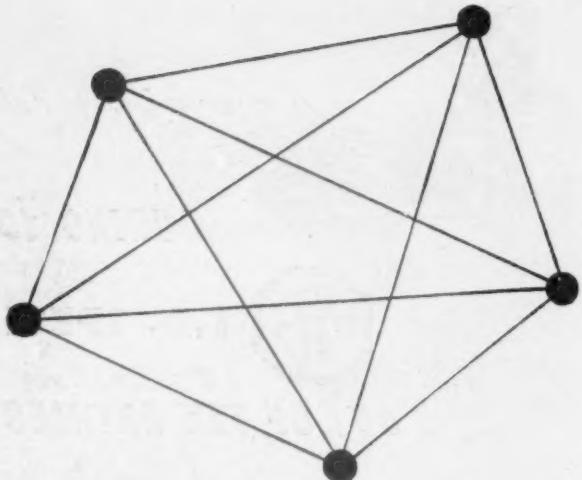
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